

## Are You Managing Time, Or Is Time Managing You?

Time. There never seems to be enough to go around. Trying to balance all of the demands on your time can become overwhelming. By learning how to manage your time effectively, you can accomplish more and feel less stress. The key is to make the most of the time you have available.

A variety of time management techniques are available. The one that works best for you will depend greatly on your personality and your typical habits. Experts recommend the following steps to help you more effectively manage your time and gain a sense of control over your life:

**Make Clear Goals**—Establish short-term, intermediate and long-term goals. Review them frequently, and update them as they change.

**Establish Your Priorities**—All tasks have a different value. Prioritize your goals and use this information to create an organized “To Do” list. By putting the high priority items at the top of your list, you will devote the most time to what needs to be done or what is important in your life.

**Learn to Handle Distractions**—Remember to stay focused on your objectives so that phone calls, visitors, or unexpected meetings don’t distract you from your daily goals.

**Follow Your Energy Cycle**—Do difficult, important tasks when you are alert and have the most energy. Save the more routine chores for the times when your energy level is low.

**Maintain a Realistic Pace**—Be realistic about what you can accomplish each day. Don’t expect to finish everything on your “To Do” list.

**Manage Procrastination**—Don’t avoid large or complicated projects. Try dividing these tasks into smaller, more manageable parts and tackle them one at a time.



# Managing Work-Life Transitions

Many of us can remember Mr. Rogers' routine as he returned home from work. While listening to him sing "Won't You Be My Neighbor", we watched him change his shoes, replace his jacket for a cardigan, and gradually shift from his "work life" to "home life." Making an appropriate transition from work to home and vice versa can help you enjoy all aspects of your life more fully. Too often, we begin our day at work thinking about tasks waiting for us at home, or bring work issues home with us at night. The following simple suggestions can help you better manage the daily transitions between work and home.

## From Home to Work:

- **Plan ahead.** Many people find it helpful to plan the next day's activities the evening before. If you have children, you may consider setting out clothes, packing lunches, etc. the night before to help avoid the last minute crises that can often erupt when you are rushed. If you have materials that you need to bring with you to work the next day, make sure that you lay those out in advance, too.
- **Establish goodbye rituals.** Whether it is saying goodbye to family members or to the family pets, it can help to establish a consistent pattern for your farewells. If you have children, you may want to consider associating goodbyes with a positive activity, such as reading a short story, talking about the day ahead or simply making sure you always tell them you love them and give them a kiss goodbye. With other family members, you may want to take this opportunity to discuss your evening plans and when you hope to return home later in the day.
- **Have back-up plans.** Even the most organized person will be hit with surprises from time to time. It is important that you and your family members establish back-up plans for these unexpected occurrences.

## From Work to Home:

- **Leave work issues "at the office."** If you have had a bad day at work, the last thing you want to do is bring those issues and feelings home with you. Your family members will sense your mood. Instead, try to mentally remove yourself from work before returning home. Take the last few minutes of your work day to jot down notes of what you hope to achieve the next day, important meetings that you might have and issues that are unresolved from your current day's activities. Make sure to keep this list realistic. Setting unrealistic expectations for the day ahead will only increase your anxiety as you return home.
- **Establish returning home rituals.** Just as important as it is to establish rituals for leaving home in the morning, it is equally important to establish consistent patterns for returning home after your work day. Many people find the simple act of changing their clothes to be one of the easiest ways to shift from their "work self" to their "home self." Others enjoy exercising as a way to navigate the transition. Experiment and find out what is most successful for you.

## Remember . . .

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to you and your eligible dependents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All services are confidential and provided at no cost to you. As part of your EAP, you now have access to MagellanAssist. Visit today at <http://www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/other/eap/Assist.shtm>